

The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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A PASSION FOR SOULS

By Evangelist Jesse M. Hendley

Box 600, Atlanta, Georgia

(Sermon preached at Sword of the Lord Conference on Evangelism, Winona Lake, July, 1945. Mechanically recorded for The Sword of the Lord.)

In Luke the fifth chapter, verse 10, we have the record of one of Peter's great crises (he had many, as you know) when the Lord Jesus said to him, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men."

Peter's Crisis

This is not the first time Peter really came in contact with the Lord Jesus. You remember, he met Him down in Judea when his own brother brought him to the Lord (John 1:28, 40-42), but he had gone back to his fishing nets in Galilee. Peter was saved in Judea, he loved the Lord, but he was not winning souls. The Lord came to him and gave him a blessing, and then Peter said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." I have often wondered why Peter said that. I believe it was because he realized he had failed the Lord. He had not seen all that God had wrapped up for him in the very beginning of his conversion. Jesus said, "Fear not; from henceforth (from this moment on) thou shalt catch men." Peter fell on his face and repented and said, "Lord, I am a sinner." He became a great soul winner after that. Oh! it is a great time in any man's life when he confesses he has been careless about souls, and when Christ says to him, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men."

God Wants Fruit

It is important for us to see that if we are going to win souls to our Lord we must get cleaner and cleaner and cleaner. The reason that God cannot save any more souls through my life and yours than He is saving is that we are not clean enough. That is the teaching of John 15. When a branch brings forth fruit, He cleanseth it in order that it may bring forth more fruit. God is always hunting for fruit in our lives. Paul wrote to the Romans and said, "I want to go to Rome that I may have some fruit." And, facing death, he said in his letter to



Evangelist Jesse Hendley

the Philippians, "For to me . . . to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour" (Phil. 1:21, 22). Paul could not imagine his staying down here without fruit. It is said of John Bunyan that he remarked on one occasion, "I can stand anything, if I can just have fruit. If I can see men turning to God, then I am happy."

Matthew Henry is quoted as saying that if a person labored for forty years and brought just one soul to Jesus that Person's life has not been wasted. But oh, beloved, what about these Christians who do not win any souls?

Ashamed to Die

A boy in Atlanta was dying. He had been saved one year, and now (Continued on page 2)

The Wedding Invitation, R.S.V.P.

By Evangelist John R. Rice

(Sermon preached Sunday night, October 21, 1945, in Spokane, Washington. Mechanically recorded for The Sword of the Lord.)

In Luke, chapter 14, we will begin reading verse 15 and read through verse 24.

"And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. [Then Jesus tells the parable]. Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Here is a wonderful story which illustrates how God invites people to the wedding supper in Heaven.

In Matthew, chapter 22, Jesus spoke another parable very much like this one. He said a king made a marriage for his son and at supper time sent his servant to say to those who were bidden, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage."

The heavenly Father is the King who is going to make the marriage. The Lord Jesus is the Bridegroom. Christians, all saved people, are to be the bride. All of us who accept Christ will be present at that time. Sometimes the Scriptures speak of those who will attend as the bride. Sometimes they speak of them as bridesmaids, as in Matthew 25 when speaking of the ten virgins. This passage speaks of those who attend as the guests. But they are the same people, those who accept Christ as Saviour.

A man mentioned here in Luke

God Gives Editor Advance Man

By Evangelist John R. Rice

To have great union revival campaigns as fruitful and successful as they ought to be requires an enormous amount of organization, promotion, publicity and hard work. For long I have prayed that God would give me an advance man, a special representative who would have wisdom, training and experience to go into a community where a union revival was proposed, get the pastors and people united behind such a plan and work out the details of the cooperation, auditorium, committees and promotion. I cannot spend the time before a revival to work out all the details that need to be carefully attended to by an experienced expert, details that pastors and laymen do not have time nor experience to care for. During the

(Continued on page 4)

14:15 heard Jesus preach, and he said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

Jesus said, "I will tell you about the time when people will eat bread in the kingdom of God," and He told this parable. I want you to take it to heart tonight.

First, I call your attention to the supper. I am glad that one of these days we will sit down together with the Lord. You remember that Jesus, at the Last Supper, the Lord's Supper, said, "Drink ye all of it; . . . I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:27, 29). The Lord Jesus is going to eat and drink in the kingdom of God. The Scriptures make clear that even in Heaven there are trees of life. The leaves are for the healing of the nation, and they bear twelve manner of



Dr. Rice

fruit. There are a good many things said in Bible prophecy about our bodies, bodies that will eat and drink in the heavenly kingdom. You will remember that when Jesus rose from the dead He said to Thomas, "Thomas, put your fingers in my hands and see: Put your hands in my side and see for yourself. I am not a ghost. A spirit (Continued on page 2)

YOU OUGHT TO HELP

By the Editor

We are making an earnest drive, just now, to get thousands of new subscriptions to The Sword of the Lord and to have thousands of old subscribers to renew their subscriptions. My new book, The Scarlet Sin and Other Revival Sermons, 254 pages, with messages taken down word for word as used before large congregations over America, is being offered free with a nice paper binding with each two 8 month subscriptions at \$1.00 each. That is, one copy of the book will be sent free with each two subscriptions for \$2.00. Five books will be sent for ten subscriptions, ten books will be sent for twenty subscriptions.

Are you a Christian? Do you love the Lord Jesus who died for you? Do you take seriously His command to get the gospel out to every creature? Have you been blessed by The Sword of the Lord? Then you have a solemn duty to send in subscriptions and help us in this campaign to multiply the usefulness of The Sword of the

Lord. I am not pleading with you to do me a favor. I am pleading with you not to sin against God by your indifference or laziness or stinginess in failing to send in subscriptions.

Reasons Why Christian Readers Ought to Send Subscriptions

If you are a Christian and have the control or spending of any money at all, and if you are a reader of The Sword of the Lord, you cannot evade your solemn obligation to God in getting out the gospel to Christians and lost sinners through The Sword of the Lord.

1. "All the tithe . . . is the Lord's" (Lev. 27:30). The tithe of your income is not your own to spend as you like. The tithe does not belong to your church or denomination. Your tithe belongs to God. If you do not use it for God, you are an embezzler, using for (Continued on page 3)

THE CONTEMPORARY THORN-CROWN



"When they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head" Matt. 27:29.

THE WEDDING INVITATION, R. S. V. P.

(Continued from page 1)
hath not flesh and bone as ye see me have.' He, the resurrected Saviour, with a resurrected body that the disciples could handle and feel, said, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They brought Him a broiled fish and an honeycomb, and Jesus ate before them.

In Heaven we are going to have bodies that eat and drink, the Scripture makes clear. And all the saints gathered together in Heaven are one day going to sit down at that heavenly feast. I want you to think about the feast, that supper, tonight.

The Heavenly Supper Is Prepared and Free For All

Consider first that all things are ready. People are sometimes invited to dinner and then have to pay for their own meal. But the Lord Jesus invites you to come and sit down at the heavenly wedding, invites you to come and dine free. Everything is ready. He said, 'My oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage' (Matt. 22:4). And here in Luke 14:17 He says, 'Come; for all things are now ready.' The Master furnishes the feast and it is free.

That is the wonderful thing about salvation. I am not trying to sell you a bill of goods. I am not trying to get you to buy something. I am not asking you to set out to work your way to Heaven. I am not asking you if you think you can make it. I am saying it is all free. God has paid everything for you. The Lord Jesus died, and when God the Father saw His Son die on the cross, when He saw the blood poured out there, He said, 'That pays for everything. Nobody else need pay anything in the world for salvation. The price has already been paid. When My Son died it settled this matter forever.' Jesus died for our sins. He bought salvation for us. Now whosoever will may look to Jesus and find forgiveness and peace and salvation!

My mother used to sing
I'm glad salvation's free,
I'm glad salvation's free;
Salvation's free for you and me.
I'm glad salvation's free.

Aren't you glad salvation is free? The great supper is prepared. All God asks is that you accept the invitation to be present when the Lord Jesus takes His bride; when they come in from the North and the South and the East and the West; when they come: the black, the brown, the yellow, the white; when they come: the old, the young, the up-and-outs and the down-and-outs, the drunkards, the harlots who have been saved, the Mary Magdalenes and all others who have found the Saviour. Won't it be wonderful to sit down at the table in Heaven with the Lord Jesus and with the heavenly Father? You are invited!

I wish I could lay it on your heart so you would never forget it. I wish I could press it so you would say, 'Oh, I want to go!' I wish you would feel as one man felt who heard Jesus talking. He said, 'Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!' Don't you want to be one of those? If so, you must accept the invitation.

I want you to know how you can be there. In John 1:12 Jesus said, 'But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.' If you are will-

ing to receive Jesus, that is accepting salvation, that is accepting Heaven. Everything is free if you will open your heart and put your trust in Jesus.

The next thing I want you to notice about this wedding supper is that all are invited.

You say, 'Brother Rice, am I invited?' Yes, you are invited.

I remember that as I was preaching one night on that passage of Scripture in the twenty-second chapter of Matthew where we are told that He sent His servants 'out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests,' my heart just overran. I had never seen until I read it that night in the pupil that the bad and the good alike were invited. God wants you! You may come and be saved if you will.

I was in revival services at Sherman, Texas. We had been having great crowds in the open air, and I had been preaching hard against sin. One day a man came out to the little house we had rented during the campaign. He knocked, and my wife said I was not there. I came in later through the back way. My wife said, 'There are some men waiting out in front to see you. They look pretty tough, and they would not give me their names. Do you suppose you had better go?'

I said, 'Sure, I will go.'
She said, 'Don't get in the car with them.'

I said, 'Never you mind, the Lord will take care of this.'

I went to the car and asked, 'Gentlemen, do you want to see me?'

They said, 'Yes, won't you get in the car with us?'

I got in and then said, 'What are your names?'

One of them said, 'If you don't mind, I would rather not give my name.'

The other one said, 'And I would rather not give mine, if you do not mind. I am going to say some things that I do not want you to connect with the name.'

One of them went on to say, 'I heard you preach last night. I was not up in the crowd, of course. If I had been up there other people would not have come. If I had sat on those seats nobody would have sat around me. I sat back there on the wall where the old courthouse burned down. I saw an old man by the name of Welsh, an old drunkard fifty-eight years old, go down and take your hand. Do you think he was really saved?'

I said, 'Yes, I think he was.' (Bless God, I got plenty of evidence later that he was).

He said, 'I had never had any thought that I could be saved. But when I saw that old drunkard saved I just thought I would come and ask you if a man like me could be saved. Before you tell me I want to tell you that my mother's hair is as white as cotton. She has broken her heart weeping over me and praying over me. I am a dope-head. I have been a bootlegger and a drunkard. I have committed every kind of crime, even up to murder.'

The other man poked him and said, 'Go easy; go easy, fellow!' But he continued, 'I have done everything wicked. This man's father is postmaster in this town. He has spent \$25,000.00 trying to break him of the dope habit. He has gone to sanatoriums all over America. Is there any chance for men like us to be saved?'

I said, 'God loves you the same as He loved me. I was converted when I was nine years old. I have lived an exemplary life outwardly, but the truth of the matter is that I am the same kind of black-hearted sinner that you are. The Lord had to save me by His blood, and He will save you the same way if you will put your trust in Him.'

The fellow began to weep as he said, 'You don't understand, preacher.'

I said, 'Yes, I understand.'

'No,' he said, 'you put yourself in the same boat with us and you are a good, clean man. You have obeyed the law. You never did drink—you don't understand.'

I said, 'I do!'

He said to the other man, 'Pal, listen to that preacher. He says he is the same kind of a guy that we are.'

I said, 'Everybody else in the world is the same kind of a guy as you are. Every one of them would go to Hell if they did not come to Jesus Christ. He loves you and He will take you, too.'

I gave each of them a copy of the Gospel of John, and they went to the creek-bottom to spend the day in the car reading and praying. One of them never did, as far as I know, come to the Saviour. But the other in a few days came to me and said, 'Brother Rice, do you have a little time?'

I said, 'Yes.'

'Well, will you go with me over to see my mother?'

I said, 'Yes.' And we got into the car.

He said, 'I am ready to have this whole business settled, and I want to be in my mother's presence when I do it. Her heart has been broken over me. But she has prayed for me and held on; and I want to go over there in the presence of my mother and let you and her pray for me.'

We went to his mother's home and went in.

There I read Scripture and showed him again God's promises. There the poor ruined man took my hand and said, 'I will do it. I will do it!' His mother sang and praised the Lord. She sang, 'Oh, How I Love Jesus.' Lonnie said, 'I can't sing, but I love Him, too.' I saw a transformation take place in that man's life, saw him set out to try to bring others to the church and get other people saved.

Listen! I do not care how bad you have been nor how far you have gone into sin: God wants you; He invites you tonight to come. You ought to turn and be saved. The wedding supper is ready and everybody is invited.

Some of you have been invited for years and you have turned the invitation down. God sent His servant to those who had already been invited and said, 'Everything is ready. What are you waiting on? Don't let things get cold. Hurry, we want you at the wedding supper!' They had already been invited, but they were invited again and again. God has sent preacher after preacher to you. God gave you a mother to pray for you. God gave you a wife, it may be, to plead with you. God gave little baby fingers to hold on to you, and somebody to follow in your footsteps. God wants you, and He has called you again and again. You are invited to the wedding supper!

God's Servant; The Soul Winner

Next, I want you to consider the servant. I am glad God has somebody in this business of saving souls. I am glad He doesn't do everything Himself. I am glad He doesn't say to me, 'John, I have saved you now sit over there on the bench and behave yourself. I will take you to Heaven after a while. I have nothing for you to do.' I am glad God didn't leave me that way. The Lord Jesus says, 'John, I have saved you, and now I want you to go and tell somebody else.'

The master who made the feast sent his servant 'to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.' God's plan is to use other people to get sinners saved. Somebody told you; now you should tell somebody else. Do you want to have a blessed time, have a great revival sweep this city during this last week of the campaign? Then be one of the servants to go out and bid people come, invite them to come, plead with them to come.

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A PASSION FOR SOULS

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he was dying of pneumonia. When I went to see him he was crying. I asked,

'What are you crying about, Fellow? You are saved.'

He said, 'Yes, I'm saved, preacher, and I'm not afraid to die, but I am ashamed to die.'

I said, 'What do you mean when you say you are ashamed to die?' 'Well,' he said, 'I have been saved a whole year and I haven't won anybody to Jesus. I am asking God to let me live long enough to win just one soul to Jesus.'

He thought it was a shame to die after having lived one year without winning any souls to the Lord Jesus. How long has it been since you have won a soul to Jesus? Have you ever won a soul?

Now another passage that I want to read to you is Matthew 9:36, the words of our Lord concerning a passion for souls.

'But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.'

Christ's Tears

We notice first of all that Christ had a passion for souls. 'When he saw the multitudes, he had compassion on them.' When our Lord was dying He had time to win a soul to Himself. Everywhere He went He was in the business of winning souls to Himself. 'He MUST needs go through Samaria.' Why? There was a poor sinner up there that He had to win to Himself. 'Zacchaeus, make haste, come down; out of that tree, for today I MUST abide at thy house' (Luke 19:5). Why that 'must'? Because Zacchaeus was a lost soul that Jesus must win to Himself. 'I MUST preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent' (Luke 4:43). Why that compelling 'must'? Because men are lost! He wept over the city of Jerusalem. Jesus looked beneath the exterior; He saw people lost and perishing and going to Hell. I tell you, beloved, He had a passion for souls. That was the characteristic thing about the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are to have a passion for souls too. How we need tears today; tears and heartaches and sorrows for others! Dr. Dale of Birmingham said that D. L. Moody was the only man he knew during his day who had a right to preach on Hell, because he did it with a sob in his voice and tears in his heart. I tell you, beloved, all of us ought to be preaching Hell just like that. We ought to be speaking the truth, but we ought to be speaking it in love. We ought to be speaking it with a sob in our voice and a tear in every word.

Paul's Tears

Paul had a passion for souls. You remember the record in Acts, chapter 20, where he said, 'Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears,' and again, 'I . . . have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house . . . repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.' The man Paul had a great passion for souls.

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All of the great soul winners down through the ages have had a great passion for souls.

Jeremiah's Tears

I love the prophet Jeremiah. He is called the weeping prophet. But I am always reminded that he was not weeping for himself; he was weeping for a lost nation. He was able to say, 'Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep night and day for the slain of the daughter of my people!' (Jer. 9:1).

I love the book of Lamentations. I love to read it because it is not just Jeremiah speaking; it reveals the heart of God. It is the sob of God going through the heart of His prophet for a lost world.

Passion is a borrowed thing, beloved. No man naturally has a passion for souls. It is Christ in the heart who creates that passion and pours Himself through that soul for those who are 'lost.'

All Soul Winners Have Been Men of Tears

A friend in Atlanta told me that when Billy Sunday came to Atlanta, the editor of the *Christian Index*, went up to see him in his hotel room and said,

'Mr. Sunday, will you tell us the secret of your marvelous success in getting men to God, getting men saved?'

He said that Billy Sunday just walked to the window, looked down at the street, pointed to the throng walking down the street, and said, 'They are going to Hell! They are going to Hell! They are going to Hell!'

That was the secret. He believed that men are lost, he loved them, and he tried to win them. Down through the ages it has been like that. All the great soul winners were men with a passion.

A biographer of Robert Murray McChesney says, 'In seven years, he led more souls to Jesus than any other man I know anything about in England.' Think of it,

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YOU OUGHT TO HELP

(Continued from page 1)

yourself what does not belong to you.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8). Do not be dishonest by keeping for yourself what the Bible solemnly says belongs to God?

Ought one use the Lord's money for subscriptions to *The Sword of the Lord*? Not for your own subscription, I think. For others, yes, as the Lord leads. Since the subscriptions to *The Sword of the Lord* would be getting out the gospel in one of the most inexpensive and yet most effective ways, prayerful readers will usually feel God's leading to use some of their money for this way of getting out His gospel to the largest number possible. You ought to send subscriptions with tithe money. Some of you ought to subscribe for every member in your church. Others ought to make a good list of Christian families who need *The Sword of the Lord*. Some of you should send it to unsaved loved ones. Some you should send *The Sword of the Lord* to all the graduating class in some seminary or the young ministers in some Christian college. Some should send it to every pastor in your city, with tithes and offerings, for Jesus' sake.

2. "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (II Cor. 9:6). One way to be sure of God's prosperity and blessing is to treat God right and put first things first. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." God gives food and clothes and other blessings to those who are first concerned about getting out His gospel. Proverbs 11:24-25 says, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." For your own blessing,

to make sure that God will bless your family and business, you should put the Lord's business first. Getting out the gospel is not only a duty, it is a guarantee of God's blessings upon you and your family. If you, in Jesus' name, and to please Him, do right about sending subscriptions to *The Sword of the Lord* to others, and otherwise follow God's leading about using your money and time and efforts to get out the gospel, you have many promises of God's answering blessings in material matters. It pays to seek first the kingdom of God!

3. "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (Rom. 1:14). Paul owed a debt to get the gospel to those at Rome. You have a solemn obligation to those round about you. God wants you to help get the gospel in its purity and power to all those you can reach. By sending *The Sword of the Lord* you may enrich the ministry of preachers, lead them to a new consecration to Christ, a new richness in their preaching. By sending *The Sword of the Lord* to church members you may be used of God to bring about a great revival as has happened in numbers of churches where *The Sword of the Lord* was spread. By subscribing for a young minister you may keep his faith from the shipwreck of modernism and worldliness and be the instrument, under God, of safeguarding His ministry to a lifetime of soul-winning fruitfulness. By sending *The Sword of the Lord* to lost lov-

ed ones you may keep souls out of Hell. In the first six days of this month four people were reported saved through sermons in *The Sword of the Lord* alone.

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Indifference of readers of *The Sword of the Lord* to this campaign would be a sin. Careless delay and postponement of duty would be a sin. Stinginess, unwillingness to spend some money for the Lord and to bless the homes and hearts of others, would be a sin. You ought to help in this campaign and we believe that you will. Send letters and subscriptions to *Sword of the Lord Publishers*, 214 West Wesley Street, Wheaton, Illinois.

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WINONA LAKE CONF. ON EVANGELISM JULY 7-14

A Plea for Attendance, Prayer, and Support

By Evangelist John R. Rice

Last summer after much toil, advertising, and expenditure we saw a blessed conference on evangelism at Winona Lake, Indiana. Hundreds of Christian workers came and were blessed. Dr. Hyman J. Appelmann, Dr. Bob Jones, "Ma" Sunday, wife of the famous evangelist, Billy Sunday, and other authorities said that it was the best thing of its kind in many, many years at Winona Lake. A number of men surrendered to full-time evangelistic work. Pastors went home and started revivals in their own churches. Hearts were set aflame for soul winning. Last year's Conference on Evangelism at Winona Lake, sponsored by **The Sword of the Lord**, was a tremendous success. So agreed everybody who attended.

Dr. Robert J. Wells, associate editor of **The Sword of the Lord**, is the director of the conference, and he will do most of the publicity. But my own heart is deeply concerned about the conference, and I want to make an earnest plea to you.

First, let me urge that preachers and Christian workers come to the conference and that Bible-believing laymen and laywomen come also. Where could you find a more delightful vacation spot than beside beautiful Winona Lake? Here you have pleasant quarters, the best of recreation facilities and at the same time can hear the greatest soul winners in America, can take part in the great prayer meetings, can feel the blessing of fellowship with the best Christians in our nation. Last year, for instance, you would have met Evangelist George Bennard, author of the famous song, "The Old Rugged Cross"; Evangelist Charles Weigle who wrote, "No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus," and other Christian songs. You would have heard the testimonies of "Ma" Sunday, of Evangelist George Stephens, of many leading pastors from many states and of the leading evangelists in America. I urge you to come.

This year Dr. Hyman Appelmann, famous Jewish evangelist; Dr. Bob Jones, Sr., founder and president of Bob Jones College and famous evangelist; Dr. John MacArthur, who has been on the Moody Bible Institute staff of evangelists and later head of the evangelists of the Fuller Foundation; Evangelist Merv Rosell, youth speaker and evangelist; Dr. Robert J. Wells, associate editor of **The Sword of the Lord** and fine evangelist; Dr. Joe Henry Hankins, Spirit-filled and impassioned soul winner now being greatly used in union campaigns; Evangelist Jesse M. Hendley, Atlanta, who has won thousands of souls; Dr. Torrey M. Johnson, international president of Youth for Christ; and Evangelist William H. Rice, on the Extension Staff of Moody Bible Institute, are on the program to speak. Dr. Appleman, Dr. Bob Jones and I will speak the greatest number of times. I have agreed to do Bible teaching each day on the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts, and I anticipate a great flood tide of blessing from Heaven upon us. I beg you now to prepare to spend those eight days, July 7-14, at Winona Lake in **The Sword of the Lord** Conference on Evangelism. I believe that your life will be tremendously uplifted and perhaps transformed forever. May God grant it! Please see that pastors and evangelists and other Christian workers get to come to his meeting.

Churches would do well to pay their pastors' expenses to this conference. Last year a godly Christian woman paid the way of a young pastor to the Winona Lake Conference on Evangelism. He was so tremendously blessed that he went back to Miami, Florida on re, and his prayers and leadership and continued agitation led to the great city-wide campaign

there with many hundreds of souls saved. At this conference young people may feel the call of God to a lifetime of Christian service. Here young ministers may get the fire of Heaven upon their ministry! Here pastors who have been worn and troubled by the grinding burdens of the years may be refreshed and come home with a new zeal and joy in the Lord. Here evangelists will learn how revival campaigns are planned and conducted by the best soul winners in America. Let some earnest Christian in every church see that your pastor has a chance to attend this conference. See now that young people and all who can, save the time July 7-14 for Winona Lake Conference on Evangelism, sponsored by **The Sword of the Lord**.

Then I plead with you to pray. Pray that all of us who speak may be filled with the Holy Ghost. Pray that the facilities may be completely taxed with the crowds that gather. Evangelist George Stephens will spend about a month on the field in the area around Winona Lake enlisting delegations and soliciting the cooperation of pastors and churches for this great conference. We believe that the greatest crowds that have attended Winona Lake Conference Grounds in many years will come this summer to **The Sword of the Lord** Conference. Oh, that God may breathe upon us in His mighty power! Planning and program and advertising will not give men what they need unless God in His mercy comes upon us and anoints us with the Holy Ghost. To that end let us devoutly and humbly pray. Let us come to Winona Lake expecting to have our lives cleaned out and filled up that we may be at our best and happiest for God.

Another burden is on my heart. Last year's Conference on Evangelism cost about \$3,500.00. I gave my own time, of course, without remuneration. Special gifts, along with the offerings at the conference, helped us to meet expenses. One earnest Christian girl, God bless her, gave a check for \$1,000.00. Thus, the expenses of the conference were met. At the more recent Los Angeles Conference on Evangelism, December 30-January 6, which I also sponsored, the heavy expenses of the conference were not met by the nightly offerings and I had to make up nearly a thousand dollars of the expenses. This year at Winona Lake the expenses will be heavier, with more speakers, with more advertising. I trust that some of you will prayerfully consider and perhaps be led of God to send money to help on the heavy expenses of this conference. The pastors, the young people and others who attend this conference will not have a lot of money. I do not feel like pressing the offerings at the conference unduly. If some of you will help me, we will subsidize this conference with enough freewill offerings ahead of time to make sure there will be no deficit, no burdensome debt on **The Sword of the Lord** or on me personally when the conference is over.

Pray about it, and if God leads you to send an offering for this purpose, just designate it "For the Winona Lake Conference on Evangelism" and send your offering to the undersigned.

Evangelist John R. Rice, Editor
The Sword of the Lord
214 West Wesley Street
Wheaton, Illinois

THE WEDDING INVITATION, R. S. V. P.

(Continued from page 1)

Of course, you will not get everybody. This servant must have had a lot of disappointments. He went to one crowd and everybody made excuses. He didn't get them. He came back to the master and said, "I have done what you said but they wouldn't come. They made excuses."

The master of the house said, "All right, go then to the maimed, the poor, the halt, the blind, the down-and-outs, and get them." The servant went to them and got some. Then he came back and said, "Lord, it is done as Thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. [There is plenty more room. What will I do?]"

He said, "Have you been all over town?"

"Yes."

"Over across the railroad tracks?"

"Yes."

"Well, now go out into the country. Go first on the main highways and then go down the hedges. Everywhere you go, invite the people to come, compel them to come. My house must be filled!"

God wants people to go. I am glad God wants me to be a soul winner. I am glad God allows you that privilege. Go!

Perhaps you say, "I talked to a man once and he turned down the invitation. He wouldn't come." Well, the Lord Jesus loves sinners and waits and waits and pleads. The Spirit goes many a

time. You should, too. Go out; if you cannot get the rich, get the poor.

In Dallas, Texas, two good women were out doing personal work from house to house. They went right down Tenth Street in Oak Cliff. After a half day's work they came back disheartened and discouraged. One of them said, "We won only one woman; we worked all afternoon and just got one woman saved. Nearly everywhere we went a maid came to the door and said, 'The Madam isn't in,' or 'Madam can't see you now.' We would even have to talk through the locked screen door to the maid."

I said, "In the first place, you ought to be glad you got one woman saved. Any two Christians in the world ought to be very happy to work half a day and get one precious soul saved. You ought to be clapping your hands for joy. In the second place, if you can't get them saved up on Tenth Street where there are nice homes and where maids come to the door and say, 'Madam isn't in,' go down on Elm Street, back of the park. There you will see the little shotgun houses on narrow twenty-five foot lots. There you will not be met at the door by a maid. There you will not find any carpets on the floors. You will find that they have little coal stoves and that they walk up and down the railroad tracks and pick up coal in a gunny sack to burn in those little

GOD GIVES EDITOR ADVANCE MAN

(Continued from page 1)

campaign the burdens of preaching three, four or five times are so heavy that I cannot give the time to publicity, delegations, organization of the choir and ushers that is absolutely essential to the best results. I have prayed for a devoted, talented man who would be willing to spend his life in helping me promote revivals. Thank God, He has sent such a man.

Mr. W. F. (Bill) Mann is a mechanical, production and construction engineer of wide experience. Although a comparatively young man, he was called to lay out a large part of the immense Dodge plant in Chicago, which made motors for the Flying Fortress. His engineering crew reworked the retractable landing gear on the Vengeance dive bomber and replaced seven hundred parts with twelve. He could receive a very large salary in Detroit with automobile manufacturers or elsewhere with airplane manufacturers, since he has served with signal success in both fields. He is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, was for a season the head of the archaeological and historical work of the state of Pennsylvania Department of Education. He is a splendid organizer who directed the second successful campaign of Senator Joseph Guffey of Pennsylvania for the United States Senate.

Two years ago I met Bill Mann and laid on his heart the need for workers. God dealt with him and the business world lost much of its appeal. Last March he surrendered to God's call to full-time Christian service. He came at once to Miami, Florida, where he spent one month preceding and during my union campaign there with all the Baptist churches of the area. Now, for weeks he has been helping Mr. Willis Haymaker, Dr. Bob Jones' advance man, in the promotion work of the great Chicago united campaign.

Brother Mann comes to help me wholly by faith. I have not promised him any definite salary. He and I will trust the Lord alike and share the provision God sends.

Bill Mann was a member and treasurer of Calvary Baptist Church, Whittier, California, has a lovely Christian family and

hopes to make his home in Wheaton very soon, as God provides living quarters.

I shall be glad to send Brother Mann into any city or town where some pastors and Christian workers feel we should have a union revival. There he can meet with pastors, answer questions, suggest a reasonable basis for cooperation among the churches, reassure doubters and help in the organization of revival committees, in the securing of the proper auditorium, etc. This work will be done in faith and without obligation, wherever request is made and we can get to it.

Interested pastors or workers who want Mr. Mann's services in exploring the possibilities for great union revival may write him in care of **The Sword of the Lord**, 214 West Wesley Street, Wheaton, Illinois.

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(Continued on page 5)

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(Continued from page 4)

do not have jobs. [It was during the depression]. I was down there Saturday night and took a girl a pair of shoes so she could come to Sunday School. They called in the neighbors and we sang and prayed. Everybody came piling in to see what the preacher had to say. Go down there where they are poor, where they don't have anything, and somebody will listen to you. If you can't get the up-and-outs, get the down-and-outs."

The blessed gospel must be preached. Go and compel them to come in. There is somebody you ought to go to see and get to this meeting. Go with a burden, go with all your soul and get people to come to this revival and hear the gospel. Then when I give the invitation, get them to come down the aisle and take my hand as a token that they are repenting of their sins and trusting Jesus to save them. God has a work for servants to do. Aren't you glad of that?

Lying Excuses For Turning Down Christ

Now, I come to the excuses. Isn't it strange that people would not want to go to Heaven? How wicked, how perverted, how ungodly are the hearts of men who do not come to Jesus the first time they ever hear that God loves them!

I heard Brother Anthony Zeoli, famous evangelist, tell how he was a prisoner. He had been a pickpocket and a thief. In the jail a negro man was saved. The negro told him he could trust the Lord and be saved. He got interested. Somebody brought a Testament and he wanted to read it. He was away in a small cell. Away up high there was a little light. He got a big box, put a chair on top of it and got up there so he could read the Testament by that little dim light. He found John 5:24, the verse the colored man had told him about. He read it. For the first time he saw how to be saved, and immediately he turned to Jesus and was saved.

God has been running some of you down. He has been chasing you, has been pleading with you for twenty or thirty or forty years; and yet you have gone on in sin. How wicked that is!

These people about whom we read made excuses and turned the messenger down. You would think everybody would want to go to a big wedding feast given by a prominent man. But they did not. They began to make excuses. "The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." (He didn't even say, "Excuse me.")

I want you to notice these three excuses. They are very silly and unreasonable excuses. The first man said, 'I have a piece of ground. I have already bought it. It is supper time now, but I must go to see it tonight.' In the first place, he should have waited until daylight. He could have seen it better than he could have at supper time. In the second place, it probably would have been there the next morning. I do not see what his hurry was. It looks pretty silly to me that he bought a piece of ground he never saw.

Now here is a fellow who says, 'I have already bought a piece of ground and I must go to see it tonight. I can't go to the supper. I have been invited a long time, and I know it; but I just can't go. I beg you to have me excused.'

That sounds fishy to me. Doesn't it to you? I do not believe he wanted to go to the supper, do you? No sir! Jesus told us of that silly excuse so you would see how silly your excuses sound when you turn down the Saviour.

Another fellow said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to prove them. It is nighttime, but I am going to hitch them up and prove them." I rather think that could be translated, "I am going to break them in."

I never did break oxen, but I have broken mules. It is bad enough to hitch one young mule in with a good old solid mare, tie him back to her hames, and break him.

It is hard enough to break mules in the daytime. What sense would there be in hitching up five yoke

of oxen, new oxen, to try them out in the night?

Another man said, "I have married a wife and I cannot come." He ought to have known she had newer clothes than she would have after two or three years! He ought to have taken her to the wedding feast while he could. My wife did not get any new clothes for two years after she married this poor preacher. We skimped and saved and went on to Seminary classes together.

Another thing, his wife probably weighed 117 pounds. She would weigh 170 in a few years. He should have taken her while he could. All you men know it was a good deal easier to take your wife out to dinner when you were first married than it was later when you had five or six little children to take along with you.

What I want you to see is that the excuse which this man made for not going to the supper was a silly excuse. Evidently the man said, "I do not want to go. You need not even apologize. Just tell Him that I am married and am not interested—I am not coming."

The reason Jesus told us about these foolish excuses was that all the excuses made for not being a Christian are just as silly. They are not only silly; they are also lies. And people who make such excuses really do not want salvation. There is just one reason why anybody here is not a Christian. That reason is found in the Gospel of John, chapter three, beginning with verse 19: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

A man who really wants to do right turns to Jesus the first time he ever hears about Him. A man who turns down Jesus never does it for a good reason. There is not any good reason for turning down Christ. If you are not a Christian tonight it is only because of some wicked, hellish, sinful reason.

"Well," you say, "Brother Rice, I am a good man. I am doing the best I know how to do." No sir, you are not a good man. You are not doing the best you know. You are not doing right. You are not even trying to do right! If you were you would run to Jesus Christ and beg Him for mercy, trust Him as your Saviour and then love Him and serve Him. Every reason, so called, that you give for not being a Christian is not a reason; it is a lying excuse. There is not any good reason for turning down Jesus Christ. If you are not saved tonight it is because you love sin and do not want to do right and will not hear the voice of God because you do not want to.

Jesus tells us about these silly excuses to show us how silly and foolish is any excuse any man

ever made for not being a Christian.

What are your excuses? I want to mention some excuses that you may be giving. Maybe you say, "Well, Brother Rice, I am as good as other people are." Maybe you are, but let me tell you what God says about you. In Romans 3:22-23 the Scripture says: "... for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." You might be as good as anybody on top of the earth, but you will go to Hell if you do not get under the blood. You are a sinner. "There is none righteous, no, not one... They are all gone out of the way... there is none that doeth good, no, not one." You are not good; you are a sinner! In Isaiah 53:6 we are told: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way." You are a sinner!

In Jeremiah 17:9 the Scripture tells us: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" You see you are a sinner, and you are going to die and go to Hell if you do not repent.

In Luke 13:3-5 Jesus says, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." If you do not repent you are going to perish. It is turn or burn! I do not care how good you are. You may say, "I am a nice woman," but you are going to fry just the same as anybody else if you do not repent of your sins. You may say, "I am a good moral man. I gave money to the Red Cross and Community Chest." But you are going to fry in Hell just the same as the vilest sinner who ever lived if you do not repent of your sins. God intends for you to repent, and if you do not do it you are not going to be saved. You are going to Hell. You are not good enough to keep out of Hell. You need not brag on your morality. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only passport to Heaven, and if you are not under the blood, if you have not been converted and born again, you are lost and will miss Heaven unless you get that settled.

Somebody says, "Well, Brother Rice, I am a church member. I have been baptized." Somebody may say, "I have always been good. I have been in a church since I was a child." It is bad enough to go to Hell anyway; but, oh, how I pity the man who goes to Hell from a church!

What if you have been baptized? Did it change your heart when you were baptized? Did it make your heart white because you had some water on the outside. You went down into the water, it may be, a dry sinner, and came up a wet sinner. But you had the same dirty, rotten, black heart when you came out that you had when you went in. Water will not change the heart. I am for baptism if a person has something to be baptized about. I am not for baptism if it is a lying hypocrisy, if it is an insincerity, if it is a false show, if it says what is not true. No person ought ever to be baptized until he is saved.

You say, "But, Brother Rice, my name is on the church book." Judas Iscariot had his name on a church book, too; and he is in Hell tonight. Paul the apostle had his name on a church book when he

was a lost sinner. John Wesley had his name on a church book when he was a preacher, but he was not converted. I warn you now that being a church member is not enough. You must be born again!

Somebody says, "Brother Rice, I am afraid I can't hold out." Well, I am afraid, too, that you can't hold out. But suppose that you really wanted to live right worse than you do now. Suppose you let Jesus Christ come into your heart and the Holy Spirit of God live within you. Then if you tried to live right, if you read your Bible and prayed and went to church, don't you think you could live some better than you are now living?

The real truth is that you do not want to live right. If you did, you would run to Jesus and beg Him to help you. The fellow who says, "I am afraid I can't live right and therefore I will not be converted," really means, "I don't want to live right! I want to go on in my sins!" But that is an alibi that some preacher will swallow. Everybody knows that if you wanted to live right you would ask Jesus to help you. You would trust Jesus and let the blood cleanse you. You would want the Spirit of God within you. You would want your life made new and your heart made right. You would want to be converted if you really wanted to live right. That is a lying excuse. You are not sincere. If you really wanted to live right, you would go to Jesus Christ and ask Him to save you and let Him make your heart right. You say, "Well, I would still make mistakes." Yes, you would; but you would have a different heart, and you would have the Saviour who would be ready to help you do right.

Somebody says, "Well, I don't feel like being saved yet." How do you suppose you ought to feel to be saved? Incidentally, the Bible does not say how you ought to feel. But I will tell you how you ought to feel. You ought to feel like saying, "I am an old sinner going to Hell, and I am playing the fool to put off getting saved."

You say, "Brother Rice, don't you think you ought to have a certain amount of conviction?" The Bible does not say how much. If you are convicted enough to know you are a sinner and if you want to be saved, then you can put your trust in Jesus and He will save you. Anybody who wants to be saved can be saved.

How do you have to feel before you call a doctor? There is no law about that, is there? A sensible man calls a doctor when he is sick, doesn't he?

How do you have to feel before you make a deposit of money in a bank? You just have to feel like risking the bank.

How does a man who is in jail for a crime have to feel before he gets a lawyer and turns his case over to the lawyer? Feeling is not the point. The point is he is turning his case over to somebody who can help him. If I were you and were a sinner and knew it and wanted to be saved, then feeling or no feeling, I would repent of my sins. And repentance does not mean weeping; repentance means a heart-turning. I would say tonight, "I know I am a sinner. I am sorry of it and I am going to ask Jesus to save me." People are not saved by feeling. They are saved by Christ. If you are willing to turn your back on your sins and trust Him to save you, He will do it. Anybody who says he is waiting for feeling, is just using that excuse as an alibi for going on in his sins.

Somebody else says, "Well, Brother Rice, there are hypocrites in the church." You are right; there are hypocrites in the church. But there are also hypocrites in (Continued on page 6)

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By the Editor

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THE WEDDING INVITATION, R. S. V. P.

(Continued from page 5)
the grocery stores. There are also hypocrites in the hotels. Hypocrites ride trains. I notice you still ride trains. Hypocrites own automobiles. I see you still run an automobile. There are hypocrites here in Spokane. Isn't it strange that you never did think of moving out of Spokane because some hypocrites live here? I see you do not mean business. I see that that is a lying alibi. I see that that is not a real reason.

Maybe there are some hypocrites in the church—maybe there are!—but hypocrites did not keep you out of the lodge. The fact that some hypocrites bank their money does not keep you from banking your money. The fact that some hypocrites have jobs does not keep you from getting a job. So you are not sincere about it. Sure there are some hypocrites in the church, but the hypocrites in the church, if they are not truly converted, are going to Hell. And that is where you are going if you do not trust Christ and get saved. Hell is going to be full of hypocrites. You will be right in the middle of them; in fact, you will be as big hypocrite as any of them. I tell you the real hypocrite is a man with a dirty, rotten heart who does not love God, who does not read his Bible, who takes God's name in vain, who goes on and lives for the devil. He does not want to be saved. He will not listen to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit calls and calls and he turns him down. And yet he talks about hypocrites in the church. The poorest, weakest man or woman in the church who has trusted Christ and who tries to do what Jesus wants him to do, is better than you are. You do not want to do right. You do not even try to, do you? You like to run down some weak Christian. With you it is deliberate. With others it may be weakness. You run down others who try to do right when you do not even want to do right and will not turn to Jesus, will not let Him save your soul. I tell you frankly that I do not have respect for that kind of thing.

Suppose Simon Peter had said to John the apostle, "I have learned that Judas Iscariot is a hypocrite and is going to Hell. Since Judas is a hypocrite let's all turn Jesus down and go to Hell, too." Now, wouldn't that have been bright? Wouldn't that have been intelligent? But you say, "Well, some people in the church are hypocrites and so I am going to Hell." Isn't that smart? I tell you, you had better repent of your sins and turn away from your lying excuses!

Somebody says, "Well, Brother Rice, I know you are right and I am going to be saved, but not now. Another time I am going to be saved." No, you do not have any say about another time. You can say, "No," about now; but you cannot say, "Yes," nor "No," about another time. God gives you today. He will not give you tomorrow, maybe. Today is the day of salvation. "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." If you ever plan to be saved, turn to Jesus, trust Him and love Him and be saved tonight. God is calling you.

R.S.V.P.—You Must Make Reservation Ahead of Time

Those who were going to this wedding feast had to answer ahead of time. Why didn't the king say, "I will keep my servants at home and all who want to come may come. They can just come on without letting me know about it." No, no, everybody who was going to be at that feast had to answer.

I remember when I was in Baylor University in my senior year one day I got a beautifully engraved card in an envelope. It was an invitation which said, "The Baylor class of twenty-one invites you to be present at the

Junior-Senior banquet in the Gold Room of the Raleigh Hotel, February the twenty-second." The juniors were giving a banquet to the seniors. Enclosed with the invitation was a little card which said, "Lloyds McClure Cooke." She was my sweetheart, the girl who had promised to marry me. She was a junior and I was a senior, and she was inviting me to be her guest and accompany her to the Junior-Senior Banquet. In the corner of the big card were printed these letters: "R.S.V.P." I remember the time when I had asked Miss Alta Jack, French teacher, what R.S.V.P. meant. She said, "That means, 'respondez s'il vous plait'."

I said, "Well, I suppose so; but what does that mean?"

She explained that that means in French, "Answer, if you please."

I was invited to a great banquet in the Gold Room of the Raleigh Hotel. I was invited to be there as the guest of the junior class. It was not going to cost me anything. The juniors were to take care of that. And my sweetheart had asked me to accompany her. Everything was all provided, but I had to answer. If I did not "respondez s'il vous plait" she was going to get somebody else to take her to the banquet. Do you know what I did? I "respondez s'il vous plait'd" right away. I answered right away. I made sure about it.

I was working my way through college and I did not have time for much social life. Now all of my friends would be there. There was one boy who was going to the mission fields. There was somebody else from another state whom I would never see again, perhaps. And I wanted to sit beside my sweetheart. I wanted to have part in that banquet, and so I answered. And then just to make sure, I cut across the campus at eleven o'clock when she would be coming from her English class (I knew the path she would take to the dormitory), and I had her sit down on a campus seat for a little bit and have it all settled that on that night I would be there.

I say, I was working my way through college. I did not have much money. But I said, "My girl is going to have as nice flowers as anybody." So I sent to the florist and got American Beauty roses that cost \$6.00 a dozen and had stems that long (measuring). I was so poor that ordinarily I had to ride a bicycle because I could not pay streetcar fare, but that night, dressed up as we were, I ordered a cab and we went in a taxicab to the Gold Room of the Raleigh Hotel.

When we went in and found our places there were rows of silver on each side of the plate. I watched very carefully to see how other people did it. You begin on the inside and work out, do you? I used to know about that. Anyway, they served one course and we ate it. Then they took that plate away and got us another plate and we started again. My, what a good time we had! Oh, what a wonderful time! I "respondez s'il vous plait'd". I answered, if you please. I said, "Yes, I will be there. You can count on me."

Dead friend, God wants you to be present at the wedding feast. Oh, with what patience and tender love God keeps on calling sinners to come and be saved! He loves you. Oh, God gave His best to keep you out of Hell. God wants you to be there. He says, "Won't you answer tonight?"

In Kansas City D. L. Moody preached the last sermon he ever preached on the text I have read to you tonight. He said, "How many of you here would take a piece of paper and address a note and say, 'To the Lord God of Heaven and Earth: I have this night received an invitation from Your messenger, Your servant, D.

L. Moody, to be there at the wedding supper in Heaven. I pray Thee have me excused. I am not coming.' Would you do that to the God of Heaven who made you and invites you? Well, you may be doing it. You might as well put it on paper as to do it. If I were you I would not do it. I would say, 'Tonight by God's grace I am going to accept God's invitation. If He wants me in Heaven, if He would be happier for me to be there, if it is all paid for, and if it is free, if all I have to do is trust Jesus, I will trust Him tonight and let Jesus be my Saviour.'

"Well," you say, "I have good excuses." But none of those men who made excuses should taste of that supper. Every one of them missed the supper. And your excuse is just good enough to send you to Hell, that is all. Oh, do not wait any longer!

How many of you here tonight can say, "Thank God, I know I am saved. I have already accepted that invitation, and I have a place reserved for me." It is wonderful to have a place reserved. I wanted to make sure I had my ticket back to Chicago and would get on the plane. Planes are so crowded these days, so I went down and bought my ticket to Wheaton and back out to Portland again. I have such a little time that I could not see my family, could not oversee some things in the office that have to be done if I could not get a plane reservation. So I went ahead of time and got my ticket; I have the reservation, I have the ticket. Well, brother, I have a ticket surer than that to get me to Heaven. I already have my ticket for Heaven. It is paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ. I am going to sit down at that wedding feast some day. Maybe I will be away down toward the end of the table, but I am going to be there, bless God! John Rice is going to be in his place when the roll is called. Are you?

A Word to Any Who Read This Who Are Yet Unsaved

If you have read the above sermon on **The Wedding Invitation**, will you go on rejecting Christ and making your lying excuses or will you repent of your sins today and trust Christ to save you? Will you say to God, "I pray Thee have me excused" or will you gladly accept His invitation? If you will here and now turn from your sin and accept Christ, please sign the decision form below. Say yes to God in your heart at once, and then copy the decision letter and send it to me or write me in your own words to tell me that today you are accepting Christ's invitation. I will send you a letter of encouragement and counsel to help you live for Christ.

Evangelist John R. Rice, Editor
The Sword of the Lord
214 West Wesley Street
Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Brother Rice:

I have read your sermon, **The Wedding Invitation, R.S.V.P.** I realize I have been a guilty lost sinner. But today I turn away from my sin in my heart. I want salvation, so here and now I accept God's blessed invitation to be saved. I accept Jesus as my Saviour, trusting Him to forgive my sins and save my soul this moment. I write you to confess Christ as mine and I will set out to live for Him the remainder of my life, by His grace.

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A PASSION FOR SOULS

(Continued from page 2)

beloved! Seven years! What a thing to say about a man! Oh, I would rather have that than to be the king of all the earth. That is the man I envy most—not the man with the most fame, or with the most money, but the man who has led more souls to Jesus than any other man.

Somebody estimated that D. L. Moody prayed with 75,000 people besides preaching his great sermons and doing other marvelous work. Sometimes I think I will take that number, 75,000, and put an exclamation point after it, then a question mark, and hang it on the wall in the front of my church, as a constant challenge to us all. What a wonderful thing to go into God's presence having dealt personally with 75,000 people! Why the question mark? To ask what I am going to do about it. What are you doing about it? Souls are dying, souls are perishing. We are to go out and bring them in.

All the great soul winners have had a passion. Spurgeon had a passion. All the rest of them down through the ages have had a passion. And today, the men who are winning souls to Christ have a passion for souls. They care! They are concerned! They want to win them to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lost Passion

I remember telling the story of Hadley and how he became ashamed of his tears and lost his power; and how he asked God to give them back, and then how God did give back his tears and his power. I told it in a certain church. At the close of the service a lady came to me. She said,

"You remember telling about the man who lost his passion and lost his tears and lost his power, and then went to God and got it all back again?"

"Yes."

"You know, I used to have that passion for souls. I would sit at the back of the congregation and weep as the pastor preached and gave the invitation. But finally I got ashamed of it. I looked around and did not see anyone else weeping. I became ashamed of my tears. Then I lost my power. I got down on my knees and said, 'God, give me back my tears!' And preacher, my husband is down there tonight in the line confessing Christ as his Saviour and Lord."

She got back her tears and with her tears, her power. Beloved, we are not going to have power with God and power with men without concern. We must have a passion to win them.

Where to Win Souls

Now, where are we to win souls? The answer is, EVERYWHERE!

In the Church

First, we can win them in our churches. Recently I was sitting on the platform in my church and a lady walked down the aisle and right up in front of me before the whole audience while we were singing. She said,

"Will somebody pray with me?"

I said, "Yes, come and follow me."

Back to the study we went, and

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down on her knees before God she repented of her sins. Then she got up, walked back before the audience and said, "I have been choking all afternoon. I just knew I had to have Christ. I couldn't stand it when you began to sing those songs. I had to be saved before the invitation was given. I just had to come."

Oh, beloved, the power of God was there. You could tell it. I want the power of God so that men anywhere and everywhere can be convicted of their guilt. God wants to give that power! He wants us to have a passion so that souls will want to be saved.

In the Community

After a service the other day one of my friends introduced me to a couple of his neighbors. He said, "Brother Jesse, these are two of my neighbors; they are lost, and I want them saved."

I said in my heart, "Praise God, you have been fishing." Down on our knees we went, and they repented of their sins and accepted Jesus. The man who brought those two to Christ is not a learned man, but he had been saved from a miserable drunkard's life, and from a wretched existence. He is one of the greatest soul winners I have ever met. He is winning men right and left.

Through the Radio

We ought to bring them in. We ought to win them by every means we possibly can. We ought to use the radio. I had the joy of preaching over Brother Epp's great program in Lincoln, Nebraska, recently. A few days later, a lady in his office said to me, "Here is a little note from a woman who sent you a dollar." I don't know why she sent me that dollar, but my soul was thrilled to read, "Preacher, this morning God spoke to me while your voice was coming over the air. I have never been convicted like that. I saw I was lost. I went down on my knees and glory filled my soul. God forgave my sins, and I am saved." It gives me a greater thrill than anything in this world when God speaks through my poor lips a word that brings a dead soul to life! I would rather see men come to Christ than to own the world. The nearest to Heaven I ever expect to be, this side of the gates of pearl, is while kneeling with a lost soul, or when I learn that someone has come to the Lord Jesus Christ. When I am preaching, I am wondering whose heart God is touching. I know that He is doing it. He has promised that His Word shall not return void. While I am preaching the Word, I believe He is saving souls. If I have sweated, prayed, labored, and prepared, I believe God will work. So while His Word is being

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proclaimed, I wonder who is being saved. Oh, we ought to win them.

On the Streets

We ought to win them on the streets. They say that D. L. Moody did not hesitate a minute to drop to his knees and pray with people on the sidewalk, on the street, in railway cars, or anywhere that he met a soul. We need some of that holy boldness—not flashiness, not foolishness, not display. God forbid that we ever do things to be seen of men. You know what that means, hypocrisy. But along with the matter of hypocrisy, we need to watch about this matter of timidity, the fear of speaking to lost souls whenever or wherever the opportunity presents itself. Some have a fear that is not wholesome, a fear that the early church did not know anything about nor give evidence of. The other day a man said, "Brother Jesse, I know a fellow whom you led to Christ, and he is now preaching." That always gives me great joy to know that a man has been not only saved through our testimony, but that God has also led him on to preaching the Word. My friend continued: "This young fellow told me that one day you saw him on the street and simply asked him if he were saved. He replied, 'No,' and you said, 'Brother, let's pray.' You bowed your heads and had a prayer, and he accepted Christ and went his way."

I do not remember that experi-

ence. I would not know the man if I saw him, but he is out preaching the gospel. When my friend told me this, I said, "Oh, God, forgive me for being such a terrible sinner as not to speak to and pray with more people everywhere and anywhere about the Lord Jesus Christ." We are to win souls for Jesus!

Anywhere, Everywhere!

In Lincoln, Nebraska, Brother Cox of the Salvation Army was telling me of the greatest revival in which he had ever been. He said that the preacher was not an ordained minister. He was a miner by the name of Pete. That is all he was ever called. Pete knew only two things: God and his Bible. That was all. Everywhere he went, he took the Lord and his Bible. He witnessed to everyone he met about the Lord Jesus Christ. Pete would pray for the miners before they went down the shaft. Some of the fellows did not like it. Finally they said, "We will do our best to keep Pete from praying for us."

One day down in the mine Pete received a note from the superintendent saying, "Come up here, I want to see you."

He knew what it was about. He prayed with the fellows before he came up the shaft. When he walked into the office, he beat the superintendent to the draw. He said, "Are you a Christian, Sir?"

The superintendent said, "I

didn't have you come up here to talk to me about that."

Pete said, "Brother, there isn't anything in all the world as important as this question." And he just waded into him with the Word of God. Soon tears were rolling down the superintendent's cheeks as he saw himself lost. The passion of Jesus swept through Pete's soul, and he said, "Brother, let's pray." Down on their knees they went, and the superintendent repented of his sins and accepted Jesus and was gloriously saved. When they got up, Pete said, "What was that you wanted me for?"

The superintendent replied, "Oh, it wasn't anything much. Let's forget all about it. You go on back to the mine, and if any of the fellows bother you, let me know."

Brother Cox continued, "I brought that man to Kansas City, and it was the greatest revival I ever had. It was not his preaching from the pulpit. That man just talked to everybody he met, not excepting anyone. All he did was say, 'Are you a Christian?' He would talk to them on the streets, in the homes, in the church—anywhere, everywhere."

Beloved, I believe that that man is revealing something of the radiance of the early church. The early church had enthusiasm. The wide world was shaken because the early Christians believed something, and believed it so earnestly that they talked about it day and night. My greatest sin, I believe, is the sin of silence when I ought to be speaking. We ought to be speaking to everybody. We ought not to take it for granted that anyone is saved. Rather, we ought to take it for granted that everyone is LOST until they tell us with burning lips that they know the Lord Jesus.

One thing ought to give us heartache, and that is the fact that opportunities to speak for Christ come our way—never, never to return—and we pass them by! That one fact distresses me more than anything else. Oh, if I died tonight I wouldn't be too sorry about not reading my Bible—I have tried to do that, and I want to do more of it. I wouldn't be too sorry about praying—I have tried to pray. I am ashamed of my prayer-life, and want to do more of it, but I have tried to pray day by day. And I have tried to do some other things. But I am ashamed that God has brought me in contact with precious, Hell-bound, dying souls to whom I have not spoken about the Lord Jesus! They have passed on into the night, and those opportunities will never come my way again! Oh, beloved, we ought to win them everywhere!

Why We Should Win Souls

The next thought is, Why win them? I want to suggest two things. First,

Because They Are Lost.

because they are in sin. They are lost. I don't know of a better reason to win them.

A girl came to me in one of my meetings and said,

"My daddy is coming tonight. You will see him sitting in the front row. I want you to pray that he will be saved." Then she started to cry.

I said, "What is wrong?"

She said, "Dad and Mother lived in Detroit. They were sweet folks, they never did wicked things, but they just left Jesus out of their lives. The other day a terrible accident happened, and Mama was killed. Dad is broken up, and he is gnashing their teeth and cursing

coming here tonight. I want you to pray that he will be saved."

All during the service I noticed him as he sat over to my right. When I gave the invitation, that man came to God. That man did not need a sermon. When death struck his wife and tore her from his arms and hurled her into eternity, he had the biggest sermon he will have. He wept as he came to God. The people were shaken to the very foundation of their souls as he stood and said, "I am glad I am saved tonight, but it is too late for my wife. We waited too late."

I just wonder if there are not many souls going into eternity as that soul did, souls to whom someone could have earnestly witnessed. I wonder if anybody ever seriously and earnestly, with the love of Christ burning in his soul, spoke to that precious woman about her lost condition. We ought to bring people to Christ before it is too late.

I believe that people who die without Christ are in Hell when their hearts stop beating. I believe they will be there forever! That conviction drives me on and on, and I pray God that it will until the Lord comes.

A hundred thousands souls a day are passing, one by one away, in Christless guilt and gloom. Oh, Church of God, what wilt thou say

When on that awful judgment day they charge thee with their doom?

The next reason why we should win the lost is this: if we do not, **God Will Require Their Blood at Our Hands**

In Ezekiel 33, we read, "O Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

That is a terrible passage, isn't it? "His blood will I require at thine hand." Blood required! It is a terrible thing to stand before God with the blood of precious souls on our hands.

An English clergyman came downstairs to the breakfast table one morning. Evidently he had had a sleepless night, and his wife asked him,

"What is wrong with you?"

"Wife, I had a terrible dream last night."

"What was it?"

The husband, who had not been winning souls, said, "I dreamed that we came before the judgment seat of Christ, and as the Master looked at me, He said, 'Where are the souls of the servants in your house?' I bowed my head and said, 'I don't know, Lord.' The Master asked, 'Where are the souls of the children in your house?' And I bowed my head again and said that I didn't know where the souls of my children were. Then the Lord said, 'Where are the souls of the people in your congregation to whom you have preached Sunday after Sunday?' And I had to answer, 'Lord, I don't know where they are.' Then I saw Hell opening and I fell into Hell, and there were the souls of my servants, there were the souls of my children, there were the souls of my congregation whom I had not faithfully warned. They were all killed. Dad is broken up, and he is gnashing their teeth and cursing

me because I had not faithfully warned them about going there."

Then the man dropped dead, right in the presence of his wife, and went into eternity.

Housewife, what of the souls of your servants?

Mother and Daddy, what of the souls of your children?

Brother preacher, what of the souls of your congregation?

The greatest preacher I know anything about, after three years in Asia Minor exclaimed, "I am pure from the blood of all men!" I cannot say that, can you?

Perhaps you say, "Do you mean, preacher, that Paul talked to EVERYBODY?"

I do believe it. This is the word of Scripture. This is the Word of God, and every word of God is pure. Paul said, "I am pure from the blood of all men." I will not believe that he failed to inquire about the spiritual condition of ANY PERSON with whom he came in contact. I believe that he warned every person he met.

On the fly leaf of my New Testament I have a sentence that burns my soul every time I see it. It is the word of a dying preacher who did not know that he was dying. He said, "When I get up off this bed, I am going to have a soul winning ministry." But he died! He had not been winning souls, and now his ministry was over. Too late!

Days are passing. Opportunities are PASSING.

Blood Required

I was in a prayer meeting where the Spirit of God was greatly felt. Suddenly a man began to sob as he prayed, "You know, Lord, how last week I met a friend I used to run around with in sin in the days before I was converted, and I talked to him about everything but his soul, and today he committed suicide!"

Blood required! I know how this man felt. Just after I was saved, I was asked to go to the hospital to see a man who was unsaved and critically ill. I delayed three days, intending every day to go, but I waited too late. Oh, the condemnation I felt when I learned that the man died while I delayed! My sleep was troubled that night. I might have won his soul from Hell to Heaven. Christian, souls are dying while you delay!

"Blood required." What does that mean? When a man murders another man, the dead man's life is required of the murderer! He is responsible for his death. It is charged up to him. He is held guilty in the matter. When God requires of us Christians the blood of lost souls whom we have not warned, does that mean that WE are responsible for their going to Hell? YES! What else can it mean? We shall be held responsible in the matter. We shall be held guilty.

But oh, the unspeakable comfort of a Christian who stands before the Lord, knowing he has been a faithful watchman to warn lost souls of sin and the devil and Hell, and has been a true witness for the Master!

On the other hand, what will be the unspeakable shame and agony and horror of the UNFAITHFUL watchman who, knowing the horrible doom of the lost, did not lift his voice to warn and plead for them to flee from the wrath to come, but let his loved ones and friends and neighbors slip into Hell—LOST FOREVER!

On your deathbed will the shrieks of lost souls you have failed to warn torment you? Will you see their ghastly faces and hear their bloodcurdling wailing and gnashing of teeth and realize you might have saved them from such a horrible doom?

No wonder the faithful Paul cried, "I am pure from the blood of all men!" No wonder faithful George Fox could happily die, crying, "I'm clear, I'm clear." Christian, are you clear from the blood of all men? If you have failed in warning sinners, will you determine just now, "I'll not die in remorse with God requiring of me the blood of the lost! I'll begin today to witness and warn everybody around me?"

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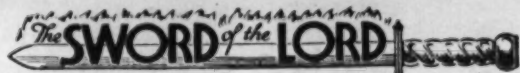
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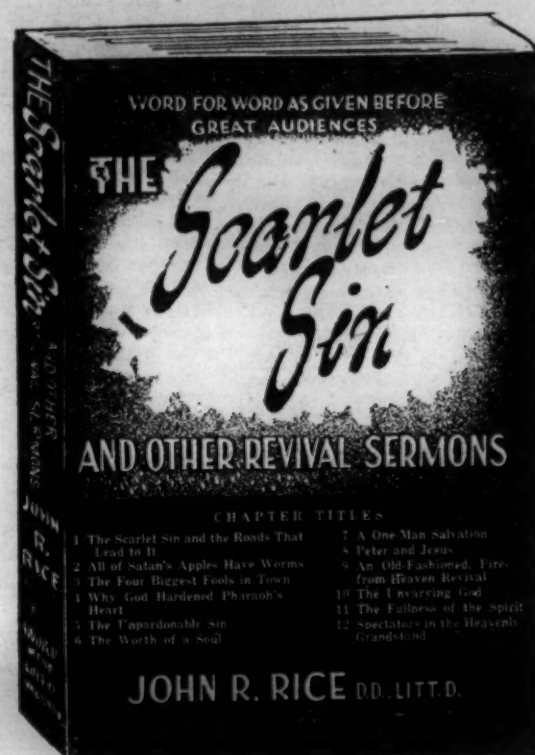
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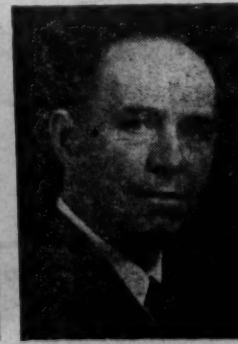
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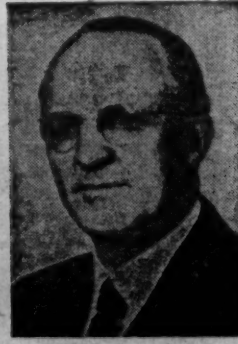
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